

# Implementation of the CALFED Environmental Water Program

## CURRENT ACTIVITIES

**Organizing the Steering Committee** – We are contacting members of the Ecosystem Roundtable Issues Subcommittee and the CVPIA Restoration Roundtable to identify members of a steering committee for the planning and implementation of the EWP. Some members have been identified, but not all of the stakeholder groups are yet represented.

**Learning Lessons** – We are contacting agencies that have attempted large-scale water acquisitions to learn what mistakes have been made, what issues have been important, and what lessons have been learned. We will be preparing an issue paper summarizing each major issue.

**Coordinating** – We have initiated discussions with Ron Ott regarding coordination between the EWA and the EWP and with USBR and USFWS regarding coordination between the CVPIA Water Acquisition Program and the EWP.

**Brainstorming Implementation Approaches** – We have discussed and considered a variety of approaches to implementing the EWP, focusing in on three principle approaches.

## IMPLEMENTATION APPROACHES

Three implementation approaches for the EWP are described below. **Please keep in mind that these approaches are still in the conceptual stage and should be considered preliminary.** The details of these approaches have not yet been completely defined.

**Alternative 1: Solicit Interest** – This was the first approach we considered. Earlier this year, we intended to include a solicitation of interest for the acquisition of water in the Spring 2000 CALFED PSP. We reconsidered this action in light of concerns expressed by CALFED legal council. However, CALFED could implement the EWP by issuing a solicitation of interest to

identify potential sellers, comparing potential acquisitions with environmental water needs, pursuing acquisitions which meet environmental water needs, and completing environmental documentation for these acquisitions.

**Alternative 2: Programmatic EIR/EIS** – This approach (shown in the first attached figure) envisions that the development of the framework for implementing the EWP would take place within the context of the preparation of an EIR/EIS. This process involves the simultaneous development of the EWP framework, description of the whole EWP in programmatic terms, and the description of the pilot implementation of the EWP at a project level of detail.

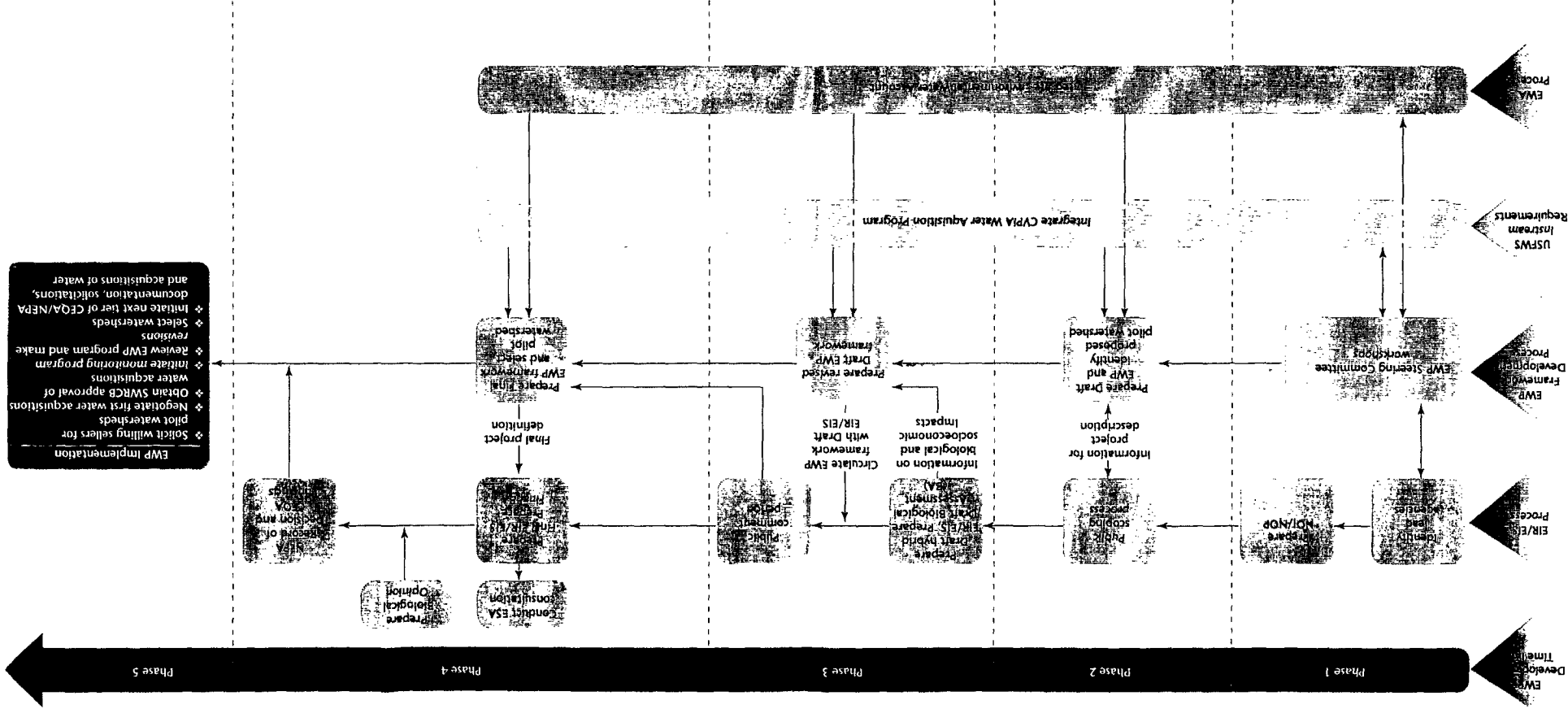
**Alternative 3: Stakeholder Involvement and Pilot Program Approach** – This approach (shown in the second attached figure) makes stakeholder involvement, science, and adaptive management the center of EWP implementation. Rather than implementing the program full-scale right from the start, pilot watersheds would be used to test various implementation methods and learn from experience.

Under this approach, implementation would begin with the selection of pilot watersheds. Coordinated modeling for the EWP, EWA, and CVPIA Water Acquisition Program (WAP), and scientific oversight would lead to the designation of environmental water priorities in each of these pilot watersheds. Then, implementation and monitoring of the EWP in these watersheds would occur in the short term, while the issues related to the large-scale implementation of the EWP are being worked out in the framework development process. Information gained from the pilot watersheds would feed back into the framework development process. Eventually, the framework would be well enough defined to allow larger scale implementation of the program.

Environmental compliance for the pilot watersheds would be done at the project level. Prior to larger scale implementation of the program, an EIR/EIS on the whole program would be prepared.

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# CALFED Environmental Water Program (EWP) Development Alternative 2 - Programmatic EIR/EIS Approach



- ❖ Solicit willing sellers for pilot watersheds
- ❖ Negotiate first water acquisitions
- ❖ Obtain SWRCB approval of water acquisitions
- ❖ Review EWP program and make revisions
- ❖ Select watersheds
- ❖ Initiate next tier of CEQA/NCEPA documentation, solicitations, and acquisitions of water

## CALFED Environmental Water Program (EWP) Development Alternative 3-Pilot Program Approach

